

Message Text

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EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

DEPT PASS OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PEPR, XF, US
SUBJ: BRIEFING ON MIDDLE EAST PEACE

REF: STATE 172477

1. I BRIEFED PRESIDENT NIMUYJJARWAC OKNN LDEFTEL
(OMITTING PARAS DIRECTED AT DAMASCUS) DURING OUR JULY 11
MEETING. NIMEIRI EXPRESSED GRATIFICATION THAT USG WAS
REAFFIRMING ITS COMMITMENT TO PEACE PROCESS AND WAS
CONTEMPLATING POSSIBILITY OF SECRETARY VANCE RETURNING TO
AREA AND CONSULTING WITH PARTIES ABOUT US IDEAS WHICH
COULD HELP BRIDGE GAPS.

2. NIMEIRI TOOK THE OCCASION TO BRIEF ME ABOUT HIS
RECONCILIATION MISSION UNDERTAKEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE
ARAB LEAGUE. HE SAID CONSENSUS AMONG ARAB
LEADERS WAS THAT SADAT INITIATIVE HAD FOUNDERED ON ISRAELI
INFLEXIBILITY. THEY FELT THAT SADAT SHOULD BREAK OFF THE
EFFORT AND CALL FOR AN ARAB SUMMIT. ALL THE ARABS
(EXCEPT LIBYA, BUT INCLUDING SYRIA AND ALGERIA), SIAD

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NIMEIRI, FELT THAT THE NEXT STEP SHOULD BE EITHER A RETURN
TO GENEVA OR THE PRELIMINARY MEETING IN NEW YORK SUGGESTED
BY UNSYG. SADAT HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO BREAK OFF
THE INITIATIVE BUT HE WANTED A FINAL WAITING PERIOD FOR
RESULTS OF PRESENT EFFORTS BEFORE ACTUALLY DOING SO. HE
TOLD NIMEIRI THAT HE HAD IN FACT BROKEN OFF THE INITIATIVE
WHEN HE RECALLED HIS NEGOTIATORS FROM JERUSALEM. THEN

PRESIDENT CARTER HAD WRITTEN SADAT AND SADAT THEN WENT INTO HIS "WAIT AND SEE" PERIOD. NIMEIRI SAID SADAT HAD FIRST SAID HE WOULD FORMALLY DISAVOW HIS INITIATIVE AT THE END OF JULY. LATER HE HAD SAID HE WOULD WAIT UNTIL OCTOBER. NIMEIRI SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE HIS MISSION WHICH WAS TO DEVISE A NEW STRATEGY FOR PEACE, IF REQUIRED.

3. ALTHOUGH SYRIA AND ALGERIA HAD TOLD NIMEIRI THEY WERE READY TO RESUME HOSTILITIES, NIMEIRI'S PERSONAL JUDGMENT WAS THAT NEITHER ISRAELI NOR THE ARABS WOULD INITIATE HOSTILITIES WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS. HE SAID ATTITUDES OF BOTH SAUDIS AND GULF LEADERS WERE QUITE NEGATIVE. THEY BELIEVED ISRAEL HAD BEEN GIVEN AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE ITS DESIRE FOR PEACE AND HAD SHOWN IT WAS NOT INTERESTED. THEY WERE ALSO STILL SEETHING THAT SADAT HAD GONE TO JERUSALEM, POINTING OUT THAT EVEN USG DID NOT RECOGNIZE JERUSALEM AS ISRAEL'S CAPITAL. NIMEIRI HAD TOLD THEM THIS WAS A MERE PROCEDURAL RATHER THAN SUBSTANTIVE MATTER, AND THAT YOU COULD NOT CHANGE HISTORY. SADAT HAD STOOD FIRM AGAINST A SEPARATE PEACE WITH ISRAEL, CESSION OF ANY ARAB TERRITORY, AND FOR JUSTICE FOR THE PALESTINIANS. NIMEIRI CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE HAD NOT TALKED TO ARAB PRESS AT ANY POINT ON HIS TRAVELS. THEY WOULD HAVE EATEN ME ALIVE, HE SAID RUEFULLY.

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